

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 568

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education, acting jointly, to make grants for community outreach programs to empower patients and health care consumers, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 2, 2005

Mrs. MCCARTHY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education, acting jointly, to make grants for community outreach programs to empower patients and health care consumers, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Patient Empowerment  
5       and Education Act of 2005”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds as follows:

3 (1) Preventable medical errors cause as many  
4 as 98,000 deaths each year in hospitals, according  
5 to the Institute of Medicine.

6 (2) There are currently many safety procedures  
7 in place to be followed by medical professionals in  
8 hospitals and other medical facilities to prevent med-  
9 ical errors, yet 42 percent of Americans still say  
10 they have personally experienced a medical error.

11 (3) One way to address the issue of increasing  
12 medical errors and medical malpractice suits is to  
13 empower patients and health care consumers, there-  
14 by curbing litigation and reducing medical errors  
15 that cost the economy as much as \$29 billion annu-  
16 ally, half of which consists of health care costs.

17 (4) According to the Agency for Healthcare Re-  
18 search and Quality, the best way to prevent medical  
19 errors is for an individual to be an active member  
20 of his or her health care team.

21 (5) Educating patients and health care con-  
22 sumers about applicable safety procedures and poli-  
23 cies and about standards of care will help to reduce  
24 medical errors.

1 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO EMPOWER PATIENTS AND HEALTH**  
2 **CARE CONSUMERS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and  
4 Human Services and the Secretary of Education, acting  
5 jointly (in this Act referred to as the “Secretaries”), may  
6 make grants to nonprofit organizations for community  
7 outreach programs to empower patients and health care  
8 consumers.

9 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretaries may make a  
10 grant to an organization under this section only if the or-  
11 ganization agrees to use the grant for a community out-  
12 reach program to empower patients and health care con-  
13 sumers, including by—

14 (1) educating patients and health care con-  
15 sumers about their role in making health care safer  
16 for themselves and their families, including through  
17 the use of public service announcements and patient  
18 safety workshops;

19 (2) educating children about their role in mak-  
20 ing health care safer for themselves, including  
21 through the use of outreach programs in local school  
22 systems; and

23 (3) supporting victims and family members af-  
24 fected by medical errors, including through the use  
25 of counseling and peer support services.

1       (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry  
2 out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated  
3 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006 and  
4 each subsequent fiscal year.

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